# st contends job refusal religion issue

be a notary public. South Carolina ists' rights in a Bible Belt state. won't allow it.

state Supreme Court.

The battle is about more than just being a notary public, with the author-Silverman, throwing out the ity to witness signatures and, in this constitution's "God clause." state, even preside at weddings.

Silverman contends that's because when you move here is what church of the required signatures on his sec- was short a legislative signature, War- Constitution." he refuses to acknowledge God, a re- you go to, and when you tell them that ond application, the state's lawyers say. ing said. quirement in the state constitution for all public officers. So Thursday he took all public officers. So Thursday he took all public officers. So Thursday he took all public officers and to fulfill the duties of the office, and his case to a higher authority — the Silverman, a Philadelphia native who plication, the result would have been actually had the required number of moved to South Carolina in 1976.

A lower court judge sided with Waring told justices.

The first thing people ask you and besides, he did not have enough out, but was returned also because he Being shall hold any office under this

exactly the same," state lawyer Brad legislators' signatures - eight - at the

return the application initially because ber to nine, and when his second ap-The state appealed, contending the Silverman had removed the word plication was rejected he opted to take tutional officers to profess a belief in Silverman, a 54-year-old math profes- case isn't about religion. Silverman, "God" from it, Waring said earlier, the whole matter to court.

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Herb sor at the College of Charleston, says who crossed out the word God in "so When Silverman resubmitted the ap-Silverman is an atheist who wants to it's the first step in fighting for ather-help me God," should not have crossed plication to then-Gov. Carroll stitution has declared: "No person who out any word on the notary application, Campbell, it also had "God" crossed denies the existence of the Supreme

> time of his first application. But redis-Secretary of State Jim Miles did tricting had changed the required num-

As a state-sanctioned official, a protect and defend the state and U.S. constitutions "so help me God."

In 1961, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that states cannot require consti-

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) - President Clinton's political advisers are sending their boss off to a pre-debate hideaway with three thoughts for Sunday night: Keep it simple, keep it safe and - above all - keep your cool.

The debate is the first of two head-to-head meetings that Republican Bob Dole hopes will shrink the president's double-digit lead in national polls. Mindful of the stakes, Clinton was flying Thursday to a scenic think tank in western New York for three days of rest, recreation and preparation.

The goal is for Clinton to look presidential and deferential without looking too defensive - and without making a lead-blowing mistake.

station was made and only or drawn Arms group

Campaign press secretary Joe Lockhart described Clinton as eager to resume debate preparations interrupted by the two-day Middle East summit.

"He's frankly apprehensive, given the head start Sen. Dole has had for the last five days," Lockhart

The president's political brain trust expects Dole to be highly critical of Clinton, with their boss most vulnerable to questions about Whitewater-related controversies, his integrity, drug policies and taxes.

They think Dole also will question the economy's strength, accuse the president of demonizing Republicans over Medicare and criticize his foreign policies — especially

with the Middle East peace process off track.

The drug issue dominated Dole's campaign leading into the debate after the Clinton administration claimed executive privilege in refusing to release an FBI report critical of his anti-drug policies.

One of the campaign's greatest fears is that Clinton flashes his temper to the national audience. A few aides are drafting questions designed to anger the president in debate preparation so he gets it out of his system. An example: Mr. President, the press has done a fine job uncovering the Whitewater affair and other controversies - why the ethical lapses?

## 7,500 troops to stay in Bosnia

7,500 U.S. troops will remain in Bosnia earlier statements. until March, the nation's top general told lawmakers today.

The latest Pentagon plan for the withdrawal of the 15,000-member U.S. troop contingent in Bosnia will require sending in 5,000 more as a "covering force" to help the withdrawing forces.

Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the Senate Armed Services Committee that a total of 7,500 U.S. soldiers would stay in Bosnia until mid-March, a larger Dec. 20.

WASHINGTON (AP) - About figure than the Pentagon provided in

By 20 December we expect to be down to a force of 10,000 Americans, 7,500 covering and 2,500 withdrawing," Shalikashvili said.

Republicans on the committee complained of a "credibility gap" between the Clinton administration and Congress in light of repeated statements last year that the U.S. military mission in Bosnia would be over by

### Russian, Chechen leaders sign accord

MOSCOW (AP) — Top Russian truce was agreed to six weeks ago. and Chechen leaders took what Prime It gives new momentum to pea Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin called a "big step forward" in the peace pro-cess today, signing a statement aimed by national security chief Alexander at permanently settling the devastating Lebed war in Chechnya.

iting Moscow for the first time since a was blasted in Parliament.

It gives new momentum to peace efforts that have largely been stalled

r in Chechnya.

The signing came at the end of talks Yeltsin endorsed the accord for the first involving Chechen rebel leader time since it was signed Aug. 23. His Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, who was vis- support came a day after Lebed's plan

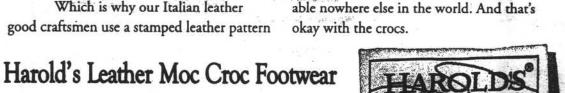
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